

## **WHAT'S HAPPENING TO OUR CHRISTIAN HOMES?**

**They're Being Destroyed By Humanism! That's What!<sup>1</sup>**

Robert L. Waggoner

I am a concerned Christian parent who was once jolted by the sudden realization that my cherished Christian values are not necessarily held by my own children. I am not a professional marriage counselor, sociologist or philosopher. As a gospel preacher, I am concerned because I have witnessed the growing deterioration of Christian homes and observed conflicting values between some godly parents and some of their increasingly worldly children.

I designed a questionnaire and mailed it to some leading brethren, hoping to gain some insights and to verify my own perspectives. From the replies to that questionnaire I have gained some beneficial insights and, for the most part, had my own conclusions verified.

Almost without exception, those who responded to my questionnaire agreed that not only the American home, but also the Christian home is deteriorating today. Moreover, most also agreed that the American home (and also the Christian home) have deteriorated not only from what it was two generations ago but also from what it was a decade ago. However, they generally believe that the deterioration of our Christian homes is not as rapid as other American homes because the spiritual foundations of our Christian homes gives them greater stability.

Our homes are deteriorating on two levels. One relates to husbands and wives. The other is about what's happening to our children. Indications of what's happening to husbands and wives may be assessed through studying such things as divorce, adultery, wife beatings, etc. My concern is primarily with our children.

The quality of a Christian home can be assessed, at least in part, by the spirituality of its children. I have observed that one of the best ways to assess the spiritual strength of a congregation is to evaluate the spirituality of its leaders by the criterion found in I Timothy 3:4, 5 and Titus 1:6. Paul told Timothy that an elder must be one "who rules well his own house, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?)"<sup>2</sup> It is true that churches that are spiritually strong have children of elders, deacons, Bible class teachers, preachers and other leaders who are faithful Christians. Moreover, those churches wherein children of church leaders are not faithful to the Lord are generally weak spiritually and to the same extent as those children are not faithful Christians.

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<sup>2</sup>N-KJV.

Applying the same standard to our Christian homes, we can say that those Christian homes are spiritually strong wherein all children are faithful to the Lord. The opposite is also true. Those Christian homes are spiritually weakened in which its children are unfaithful to the Lord and generally to that extent. The Christian home is deteriorating today because it is failing to establish strong Christian faith in its children.

In defense of many godly parents who have sincerely tried to raise their children to be faithful Christians but feel themselves to have failed with at least one child, it must be said that *all* respondents to my questionnaire agreed that it is more difficult for Christian parents to raise their children today than it was two generations ago and *most* think it is even more difficult than just a decade ago. Why? What's happening? And what can we do about it?

Respondents to my questionnaire gave many reasons why Christian parents have more difficulty in raising their children today than did those two generations or even a decade ago. However, the reasons given were not appreciably different whether contrasting present difficulty with two generations ago or with a decade ago.

When asked if they believed that the modern philosophy of humanism was the *primary* cause for the deterioration of our homes, an overwhelming majority said, "yes." Even so, there appeared to be some discomfort with attributing all our modern problems of child raising to humanism. Various other reasons were given such as "worldliness," "materialism," "secularism," "peer pressure," "narcissism," "influence of television," "break down of authority," "our permissive society," "decline in values," etc.

It would be naive to suggest that the philosophy of humanism, by itself, is the basis for our complex problems in raising our children to be Christians. The modern philosophy of humanism was preceded by skepticism and higher criticism which, for much of our world, effectively destroyed the authority of scripture. Darwin's theory of organic evolution produced the social and psychological sciences, revived ancient humanism and, throughout the Western World, completed the process of toppling God from the hearts of many. To suggest, therefore, that humanism is the major hindrance to modern Christian parents in raising their children, is not to be unmindful of these many other allied influences.

Now, maybe some of you are like I was a few years ago. I had never heard of humanism. Then one day my high school son announced to me that he did not believe in God. I was shocked! He knew the Bible far better than most Christian young men his age. Why should he not believe in God? How had he been so influenced, that in spite of what I thought was good Christian training, he was turning away from those truths and values? I wondered - what's happening and why is it happening? Because if I could find the answers to these questions, then I might learn what to do about it. I started looking around, searching for answers and in the process, I saw the same thing happening to many other Christian families. Others saw it happening a long time before I did. Speaking of Americans generally, Barbara M. Morris wrote in 1976,

"Parents who have not lost one or more of their teenage children are a rarity these days. Children are lost in the degradation of drug abuse, living promiscuously, or have otherwise rejected parental and religious beliefs and traditional moral behavior. Others

are dead from an overdose of heroin or pills, in prison, or just plain gone - their whereabouts unknown. Each kind of loss is profound and devastatingly painful to the survivors, the parents and the rest of the family.<sup>3</sup>

My research has led me to the conclusion that, through the public schools, the television and movie industries, music, the media and other means, ***the philosophy of humanism has permeated, if not saturated, every facet of our culture, including all but very conservative churches and has become the working philosophy of all our professions and many of our businesses.*** Its scope is international, being accepted not only throughout the western world but also influential upon third world nations. The United Nations charter, for example, is founded upon the precepts of humanism.

This paper is not about humanism, but rather about its destructive influence in our families and what we can do about it. In order that we know what we're talking about, I must describe humanism. Then after seeing how it has ascended to first place in our world, we'll better understand how it is destroying our Christian homes.

***Humanism is a godless religion which makes man the only standard by which all things are judged.*** Modern humanism is not to be confused with what we often call humaneness or humanitarianism. It is rather a militant philosophy which believes that man is but the evolutionary product of nature. It denies the existence of God, the authority of scripture, life after death, sin, heaven, hell, etc. While not a new philosophy, it was somewhat dormant until the advent and acceptance of Darwin's theory of organic evolution in the western world. Its beliefs are documented by *Humanist Manifesto I and II*, published in 1933 and 1973 respectively. Humanism is the primary philosophy behind such modern social and political issues as the Equal Rights Amendment, the Gay Rights movement, abortion and the right to suicide.

Most Christians find it difficult to accept the idea that, ***in the battle for the mind of modern man, humanism has confronted Christianity and now appears to have won!*** Most of us have heard very little, if anything about humanism. When we hear that this philosophy has ruling control over every discipline of study in our state colleges and universities, that it is the ruling philosophy in all major professions such as law, the media, sociology, psychology and medicine, that its philosophies dictate the policies of our federal bureaucracies, such as our national welfare programs, and that it rules supreme over the entire educational establishment of our nation, we stand amazed!<sup>4</sup> Our first inclination is to doubt it. But when we examine the evidence and verify it, then we wonder, how did it happen?

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<sup>3</sup>Barbara M. Morris. *Why Are We Losing Our Children?* (Upland, Calif: Barbara Morris Report, 1976) 1.

<sup>4</sup>For information regarding the rise of humanism in modern times, read Frances A. Schaeffer's, *How Shall We Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture*. Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co. 1976. For documentation of the influence of humanism in the legal profession, read John W. Whitehead's, *The Second American Revolution*. Elgin, IL: David C. Cook Pub. Co. 1982. For a brief treatment of influence of humanism on our homes, read James M. Parsons' *The Assault on the Family*. 1978. Pro Media, Box 2222, Melbourne, FL 32907.

At present, the vast majority of Americans have *not yet* rejected Judeo-Christian morality or even belief in the existence of God. What I am saying is that most persons now in control of institutions and governing forces of our society are far more inclined to operate on humanistic rather than on Christian principles.

The manner in which humanism has won its controlling position is important because it has a direct bearing on how Christian parents must fight the influence of humanism on their children. Humanism is now on the throne because it has been promoted deceptively through our public school system. The dominant person in 20th century American education has been John Dewey. As a socialist, Dewey wanted to make America a collectivistic nation. Through placing socialistic teachers in the American school system, Dewey would unsettle our nation from its Biblical foundations.<sup>5</sup>

Dewey's disciples became teachers at teacher training colleges throughout the United States. Those colleges then graduated teachers whose outlook on life was humanistic. Soon the educational establishment became humanistic, and public schools of higher education produced graduates of humanistic persuasion. These people now direct most of the controlling agencies of our entire society. Their next target is to change the thinking of the majority of our people from Judeo-Christian ethics to humanistic ethics, and their means of doing it is through all the facilities at their command, especially the public school system.<sup>6</sup>

The methods used by humanists in the public school system are not at all direct. They are subtle and deceptive. Through such class techniques as role-playing, survival games, encounter group sessions, daily journals, sensitivity training, etc. the public schools are turning our children

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<sup>5</sup>Dewey said, "Why should we longer suffer from deficiency of religion. We have discovered our lack; let us set the machinery in order to supply it...Education is the modern purveyor, and upon the schools shall rest the responsibility for seeing to it that we recover our threatened religious heritage." John Fentress Gardner, *The Experience of Knowledge*. Garden City, NY: Waldorf Press of Adelphia University, 1975, pp. 213-214 via Onalee McGraw, *Family Choice in Education: The New Imperative*. Washington, DC: The Heritage Foundation, 1978, p. 41. Relevant quotations demonstrating present intent of the educational establishment are as follows: "We are the biggest striking force in this country, and we are determined to control the direction of education." "We will need to recognize that the so-called 'basic skills,' which represent nearly the total effort in elementary schools will be taught in one-quarter of the present school day. The remaining time will be devoted to what is fundamental and basic." Catherine Barrett, President, National Education Association 1973, from Solveig Effers, "Unions vs. Education" *Roll Call*. April 5, 1973 via Onalee McGraw, (same source as above, pp. 54, 56). "...the battle for mankind's future must be waged and won in the public school classroom by teachers who correctly perceive their role as proselytizers of a new faith; a religion of humanity...utilizing a classroom instead of a pulpit to convey humanist values in whatever subject they teach..." John J. Dunphy, "A New Religion For a New Age," *The Humanist*, ed. by Paul Kurtz, 43:1 (January/February, 1983), 25-26.

<sup>6</sup>Two small but excellent booklets, both written by Onalee McGraw and published by the Heritage Foundation, Washington, DC, documenting humanistic entrenchment in our public schools are: *Secular Humanism and the Schools: An Issue Whose Time Has Come*, 1976, and *Family Choice in Education: The New Imperative*, 1978. Read especially Carl Sommer: *Schools in Crises: Training for Success or Failure*, Houston: Cahill Pub. Co. 1984. 375pp.

away from God and destroying our Christian homes.<sup>7</sup> It is surely not news for many of you that our junior and senior high campuses, and sometimes our elementary schools also, are actually major centers of drug distribution. Here also sex education is taught, without biblical moral values, in such courses as health, physical education and home economics, to promote sexual freedom.<sup>8</sup> Peer pressure, now recognized in our modern culture to be a greater motivator of a child's actions than parental guidance, comes from school associates who do not share that child's parental values.

I requested those who received my questionnaire to send me some true examples which would effectively illustrate what is happening to our Christian homes. Here are two illustrations related to the destructive influences of humanism, as taught in our public schools.

“A woman who lives just around the block from us pulled her children out of public school when a middle school teacher informed her son's class that they should try homosexuality and heterosexuality to discover what they were meant to be.”

“Another woman's first grader has played the ‘Lifeboat Strategy’ in his school and two of the persons in the boat were Jesus Christ and the boy's mother. The little first grader (not knowing any better) came home bragging that he had thrown his mother out of the boat. Later, her high schooler came home and she asked him about what goes on in school. He informed her that it was ‘religious fanatics’ like her who were standing in the way of people's pleasure. He said sex was merely a need like eating and sleeping and he could fulfill the need with whomever he wished. He had learned this in school.”<sup>9</sup>

Your child might not have had similar experiences while enrolled in the public schools, but there are increasing probabilities that they will. Although humanism has won its present position primarily through its use of public schools, it influences the public at large in many other ways, the most significant being the television and movie industries. Among respondents to my questionnaire, regarding the most important ways humanism is making inroads into our Christian homes, television ranked first, public schools second, music third and movies fourth.

Since television ranked first, a few things need to be said about its influence on our Christian homes. During 1983, Americans watched television an average of seven hours and two minutes per day. The major offerings on television for children are sex and violence. Violence especially influences character development of small children and sex greatly influences older

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<sup>7</sup>For an eye opener about humanistic teaching methods, read these two books by Barbara M. Morris, *Change Agents in the Schools* and *Why Are We Losing Our Children?* published from Upland, California, The Barbara Morris Report. To learn how humanism is taught in public school textbooks, read James C. Hefley, *Are Textbooks Harming Your Children?* Milford, MI: Mott Media, 1976, and a brochure by the Mel Gablers, *Humanism in Textbooks (Secular Religion in the Classroom)* 1983. P. O. Box 7518, Longview, TX 75607.

<sup>8</sup>For a good evaluation of sex education in the public schools, read David Pratte, *Sex Education in the Public Schools*. Printing Service, 1822 Highland Dr., NW, Cullman, AL 35055, 1982.

<sup>9</sup>A personal letter to author from Dick Sztanyo (quoted by permission).

children. Daytime soaps average two intimate sexual acts per hour and ninety-four percent of all sexual activity on daytime television occurs between unmarried persons.<sup>10</sup>

We have long known that we must be careful about what our children watch on television. Most parents have tried to monitor the TV set. However, I have come to the conclusion that there's no practical way to regulate television except not to have one. The writers and producers of television shows have announced their intention to change the values of the American people, and they are doing it.<sup>11</sup>

The music of America is degrading the minds of our youth. Not only rock music, but also country and western music makes a significant impact upon the morality and life style of our children. Most of this music is humanistic in philosophy. David Noebel has written that:

“Rock has turned our young ladies into sex machines, our young men into dirt balls and has abolished pride in personal appearance. It has degraded love, sex and marriage while upgrading lust and lasciviousness. It has made a mockery of morality and has encouraged bisexuality and homosexuality. And while attacking God, Jesus Christ, the Bible and Christianity, it has expressed sympathy for the devil. It has opened the door to the occult and paganism. It has alienated children from parents and widened the generation gap. It has downgraded patriotism and preached violent revolution. It has tarnished our nation's culture and promoted and sustained the drug culture. It has become our teenagers' number one addiction.”<sup>12</sup>

Many older adults do not enjoy this kind of music and do not listen to it. Therefore, they have no idea of its influence upon their children. Much of popular country and western music is immoral and seductive. Christian parents cannot build strong Christian character in their children unless these influences are greatly minimized.

We now need to look more intently at the results, and then make some suggestions regarding what we can do about it. My questionnaire listed eighteen different results of humanism and requested that respondents rank them in order of greatest to the least significant. The ten most noticeable results of humanism on our Christian homes which they ranked in the order of their importance are: first, pre-marital sex; second, divorce; third, materialism; fourth, adultery; fifth, selfishness; sixth, disobedience; seventh, alcoholism; eighth, pornography; ninth, abortion; and tenth, profanity. All but two, divorce and adultery, relate to humanism's impact

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<sup>10</sup>Brian Galloway, “Television: For Better or For Worse,” *Gospel Advocate*, ed. by Guy N. Woods, Nashville: Gospel Advocate, Vol. 126, No. 15, Aug 2, 1984, p. 470.

<sup>11</sup>From Lichter/Rothman Report, cited by Donald Wildmon, *The National Federation for Decency*, Drawer 2440, Tupelo, MS 38803, via World Radio News, Nov/Dec '83. For full account, read S. Robert Lichter, Stanley Rothman, Linda S. Lichter, *The Media Elite*, Bethesda, Maryland: Adler & Adler, Publishers, Inc. 1986, 342pp.

<sup>12</sup>David A. Noebel, *Rock N' Roll: A Prerevolutionary Form of Cultural Subversion*, Summit Ministries, Manitou Springs, CO: 80829, 1980, p. 2. Read also Bob Ethington, *How Satan Attacks the Minds of Teens*, Broken Arrow, OK: Christian Communications Inc., 1981.

upon children while they are yet living with their parents. And those two, divorce and adultery, are results of humanistic conditioning of children prior to their marrying.

Christian parents want their children to be fine, wholesome Christians and they want to be proud of their children. But when a child is drawn into shameful sins, the parents and other family members are greatly affected as is also the church. When a teenage child goes astray, his parents go through a whole series of emotional experiences. They are first shocked and disappointed, then deeply hurt. They blame themselves, feel some guilt and remorse after which they seethe in anger and build up resentment against the wayward child before they may be able to get a good handle on their new situation. It takes time for Christian parents to be able to talk objectively about their traumatic experience. Being shamed by their wayward child, they may withdraw from association with fellow Christians. Some may even excuse their child's conduct and think the sin not so bad after all.<sup>13</sup> When a teenager goes morally astray, his brothers and sisters are also affected. They too may feel some shame by association. This is a time filled with many tensions.

Here's a true story which illustrates the growing sinfulness of our times. A Christian couple had two teen-age daughters. The father was a deacon in the local congregation. Without benefit of marriage, the younger daughter became pregnant. When she told her mother, her mother insisted, against her daughter's wishes, that she quietly have an abortion. By the abortion her mother hoped to cover her daughter's shame. Afterward, when the older daughter, who was away at a Christian college, found out about the abortion, she said to her mother on the telephone, "You have killed your unborn grandchild and by that you have lost your older daughter. You'll never see me again. I'm never coming home."

When one member falls, the whole family is affected and so also is the local church. Churches experience a sense of shame and often lose the leadership of an elder, deacon or preacher because someone from an otherwise good Christian home was involved in fornication. In the above instance, when the daughter became pregnant, her mother's pride was at stake. To keep her pride, she'd have to cover the sin. Proverbs 13:28 says, "He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whosoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy" (N-KJV). Jesus requires humility and self-denial. The mother's ego got in her way. We have to deny ourselves in order for Christ to rule in our hearts.

It is appalling that among some Christians, abortion has become acceptable! Before it was legalized by the US Supreme Court in 1973, abortion would not have been acceptable by these same people, not because they then thought it was illegal (which it was) but because they then thought it immoral (which it is). Now abortion is sometimes treated, even by some believers, with no more concern than is an operation to remove gall stones.

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<sup>13</sup>Typical of some books dealing with parental heartache when teenage children go astray are Joy P. Gage, *Broken Boundaries, Broken Lives*, 1981 and *When Parents Cry*, 1980, both published by Accent Publications, Denver, CO; Guy Greenfield, *The Wounded Parent*, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1982; John White, *Parents in Pain*, Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1979. Churches might wish to use a good tract written by Holbert and Stella Rideout, *Help For Hurting Parents*, Christian Tracts, Haun Publishing Company, Box 3426, Pasadena, TX 77501.

Then there's the older daughter who condemned her mother and sentenced her to the loss of a daughter's loving care. Christian children should not give up on their wayward parents any more than Christian parents should give up on their worldly children.

And what about the husband and father - the deacon in the church? How will it affect his ability to lead? Churches are weakened to the extent that its families are shamed by sin.

A decade or so ago I heard an instructor from one of our preacher training schools say that of the twenty-five young people who were in his own church youth group as he was growing up, only three, at the time of his comment, were faithful to the Lord. If my personal observation is correct, these things are happening now far more frequently than when I was a young college student thirty-five years ago. And I am not alone in that opinion. In response to my questionnaire, one lady, a retired school teacher wrote:

“The more I learn about Christian families, the more convinced I am that practically all of them have major problems of some kind among themselves. It either is getting worse or people are getting more open about their sins. It seems to be both. They no longer can blush!”<sup>14</sup>

When Christian parents discover that one of their children has chosen a life-style incompatible with Christianity, those parents are deeply hurt. When so many of our Christian families are affected, you can be sure there are a lot of bleeding and hurting hearts in the church. And since, because of our shame, there is a general tendency to hush up our problems, our families stand alone and hurt quietly. Henry Thoreau said, “Most people lead lives of quiet desperation.” However, we should put our egos aside, acknowledge our children's waywardness and our own faults, humbly reach out to each other's bleeding hearts and resolve that in spite of all that has happened, we'll keep on doing our best to be loyal to Christ, our Lord and King.

The brotherhood is seriously affected. Worldliness in our Christian homes is stifling church growth! One widely traveled, well known and well informed evangelist, in a letter accompanying his completed questionnaire wrote,

“I have had opportunity to see the church nationwide like few people do. The following is what I see:

1. Very few homes are encouraging young men to preach because many would quit if they could make a living.
2. Personal evangelism is as dead as a hammer.
3. Interest in the local church is at a standstill.
4. Our youth have no sense of mission.
5. Morals are at an all time low.
6. There are fewer Bible majors in our Christian schools than ever before...”<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>A personal letter to author from Rita Rhodes Ward.

<sup>15</sup>A personal letter to author from Jerry Jones.

***Henceforth, Christian parents must be more dedicated to the task of raising their children. They must be more knowledgeable of the problems their children will face in this world and they must be more purposeful to achieve their desired goals of child raising.***

You may have known these things for some time. You may have known some things were wrong, but did not know what, nor why. Or perhaps you are learning things you had not the faintest notion was even a problem. In any case, we've all got to do something about the growing problem of humanism and worldliness which is facing our children and grandchildren. Now, what are we going to do about it?

My questionnaire asked for suggestions. The answers received were both general and specific. Generally, almost everyone said that Christian parents must teach, teach and keep on teaching their children. Many emphasized the value of daily home devotionals. We must seek God through prayer. ***Christian parents are going to have to become more militant in their Christianity and involve their children in the process.*** Find ways to involve your children in benevolence, in teaching, in converting the lost to the Lord and, by the process of involvement, show them that Christianity is a superior way of life.

Here are some specific things which Christians can do. ***First, for those young people who are not yet married,*** I must emphasize that your own future happiness as a Christian, as well as that of your unborn children, is now more than ever dependent upon your selecting a Christian for your life-time mate. With the anti-Christian sentiment now growing in America, it is foolish for a young Christian not to marry a Christian! By a Christian I do not mean one in name only, but a dedicated working believer.

***Second, parents of very young children may want to give serious consideration to not owning a television set.*** Children not brought up on television will not find it so difficult to do without. Young Christian couples may not want to be without a television set, but if they are to be successful in raising their children to be strong Christians, they may be forced to do without.

***Third, fathers must become more actively involved in raising their children,*** not leaving those tasks almost altogether to their wives. In nearly every congregation I know, I see three things: one, there are not enough men spiritually qualified to be elders and deacons; two, there are not enough men trained and willing to teach bible classes in the local congregation; and three, there is much too large a drop-out rate among teenage boys from church. My wife has suggested to me that these three things may be directly related to the fact that in our culture, we do not train our boys to be fathers. We train girls to be wives and mothers. From early childhood they play with dolls. But boys play with toys not related to fatherhood, but to career potentials. Boys play with cars and trucks, etc. Somehow, we need to develop ways by which our boys can learn to become, not just better fathers, but better Christian fathers.

***Fourth, parents of pre-school children must make a decision as to how they are going to educate their children.*** Personally, if I had children ready to start kindergarten, I'd not send them to the public schools. If a private Christian school was not available, my wife and I would educate our children at home. There is a growing home education movement in America today.

Legal requirements governing home education vary from state to state.<sup>16</sup> You may have to disobey state laws regarding education. *"We ought to obey God rather than man"* (Acts 5:29).

***Fifth, if your children are already in the public schools, you may find it difficult to alter their educational arrangements.*** If parents and their children are all agreeable to change to a Christian school, or to home education, great! If not, then parents must learn all they can about humanism and about what goes on in the public school.<sup>17</sup> Parents must then warn their children of the real dangers to their faith and help them fight against ungodly pressures from their classmates and teachers.

***Sixth, inasmuch as our American teen culture is obsessed with music, especially of the rock 'n roll type, Christian parents must give more careful attention to the music to which their children listen.***<sup>18</sup> Both the beat of the music, as well as its lyrics, need to be evaluated in relation to children's character development. Moreover, parents must instill within their children a desire to rid themselves of the sinful and to concentrate on that which is pure and wholesome.

***Seventh, Christians must not hesitate to become involved with local, state and national social, political and civic affairs.*** That's part of being the *"salt of the earth"* and *"light of the world."*

In addition to what individual Christians can do for their own families, there are several things the local church can do. ***First, churches need to do more teaching in the area of Christian evidences.*** There is much material and many informed brethren are available to teach.<sup>19</sup>

***Second, for a good program of youth involvement in the local congregation, coordinated under the direction of local leadership, there is none better than the Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes program developed by Jack Zorn.***<sup>20</sup> Those churches which have given

<sup>16</sup>For further information about teaching children at home, I recommend browsing through Mary Pride's, *The Big Book of Home Learning*, Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1986, 347p. It discusses home school philosophies, organizations, books, curricula, publishers, legal helps and much, much more.

<sup>17</sup>Most helpful to me has been the publication of Pro-Family Forum, edited by Lottie Beth Hobbs, P. O. Box 8907, Ft. Worth, TX 76124. Many excellent resource materials, some of which are named in these footnotes, are available from Pro-Family Forum.

<sup>18</sup>Two excellent books about rock music by David A. Noebel are *The Marxist Minstrels*, Summit Ministries, P. O. Box 207, Manitou Springs, CO 80829 and *The Legacy of John Lennon: Charming or Harming a Generation?* Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Publishers, 1982.

<sup>19</sup>I particularly recommend the materials dealing with creation and evolution called *Science and Nature: Two Votes For God* by brethren Bert Thompson and Wayne Jackson. Their addresses are: Bert Thompson, 5251 Millwood Rd., Montgomery, AL 36109; Wayne Jackson, 3906 East Main St., Stockton, CA 95205.

<sup>20</sup>Jack Zorn, *Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes*, P. O. Box 6231, Montgomery, AL 36106-0231.

good local leadership to this program are quick to praise it as most helpful to their youth. Churches which have not utilized this program would be wise to consider it.

Other suggestions might also be made, but these are enough for now. When churches learn well the nature of this problem, other ways of meeting it will occur.

Our nation is now in the midst of profound and extensive social changes. Twenty-five percent of American public school children are now from single parent homes. And while there may be a return to political conservatism, there is as yet no indication of a return to a widespread morality based upon biblical principles. We stand at the crossroads while the two major philosophies of humanism and Christianity contend with each other for the future of America and the western world. Which will it be?

We can look backward and think of the 'good ole days' when most folks had stronger moral stability than today. We can look at our present plight when the fruits of immorality are beginning to be observed in the social changes of our times. And we can look to the future and, assuming there is no return to biblical morality, lament the coming decadence which will quickly end the political freedom of our nation and the western world. But all this is to wring our hands in vain!

We cannot answer for our nation. We cannot even answer for others, but ***we can answer for ourselves***. In these times when "*we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places,*" we need to heed Paul's admonition to "*put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil*" (Ephesians 6:11-12).

Working as leaven in the world, we may, by the grace of God, change the flow of human affairs. But then again, we may not. Wise prophets of old, like Isaiah and Jeremiah, were unable to stop the deterioration of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, although they seem to have slowed their decaying processes. But whether or not we are able to affect the course of nations, we must try. We must make every effort to raise our families in righteousness and to inspire them as best we can to godly service.

When Joshua, the battle weary captain of Israel, came to the close of his life, he could look back, better than any other, and see a time when Israel in unbelief had perished in the wilderness. He could reflect upon a new generation who, by faith, took the promised land. He could realize the present faithfulness of the people to the Lord. That was a golden era of faith and godliness. Yet Joshua knew that after he died, people would turn away from the Lord. He, therefore, gathered them together at Shechem, rehearsed their history with them, emphasized God's gracious care for them and charged them to fear God and serve Him. As he concluded his charge, he left, resounding in their ears, this resolution: "*As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord*" (Joshua 24:15). May that also be our resolution and may it inspire others to do the same.